



## **Communicating Across Cultures**

Presented by  
**Ancella B. Livers, Ph.D.**

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## "Difference" in Public Health Situations

- Older adults are at an increased risk for many preventable diseases.
- Teenagers and adults in rural counties are most likely to smoke.
- The African-American infant mortality rate is 14.1 deaths per 1000, more than twice the national average of 6.9.

(cont.)

## Difference in Public Health Situations (cont.)

- Vietnamese women have an incident rate of cervical cancer that is 5 times higher than white women.
- Death rates for working age adults is higher in the most urban and rural areas.

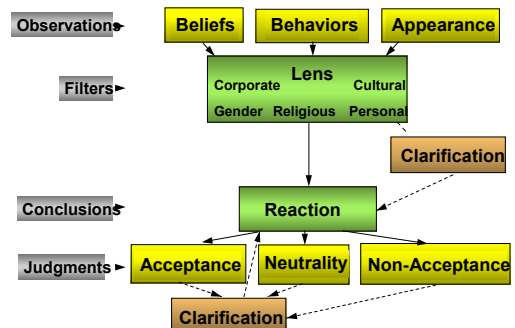
## Mental Models ...

... are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action.

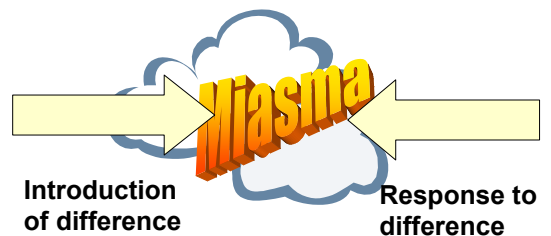
Very often, we are not consciously aware of our mental models or the effects they have on our behavior.

Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Doubleday.

## A Model of Interpersonal Behavior



## Miasma and How It Works



## Leading From a Different Perspective

- The Impact of Miasma
  - Stress
  - Trust



•Cultures

•Race

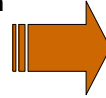
•Religion

•Gender

•Sexual Orientation

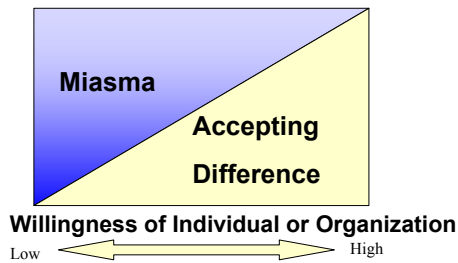
•Age

•Disabilities



**Complexity**

## The Difference Factor



Livers and Cover (2007). Landing in Black and White: Working Across the Racial Divide. Jossey-Bass

## Making the Invisible, Visible

- Keep mutual respect paramount
- Don't assume your experience is everyone else's experience
- Challenge those assumptions you most want to protect

## Making the Invisible, Visible

- Understand that differences among people really do matter - as do their similarities
- Be willing to broaden your outlook
- Seek feedback on your behavior
- Be willing to wrestle with complexity and nuance

## Making the Invisible, Visible

**Recognize it's a continuous learning process**

## **Contact Information**

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